(d) if so, what decision has been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) to (c) Yes. Sir.

(d) Modalities and time phasing Cf the withdrawal of Freight Equalisation Scheme in respect of iron and steel are being worked out *in* consultation with the Ministries | Departments concerned. These have not yet been finalised.

Decline in raw jute price

998. SHRI NEPALDEV BHATTACHARJEE; Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state;

(a) what steps Government have taken to prevent measive decline in raw jutt price;

(b) what is the volume of raw jute that has so far been purchased by the Jute Corporation of India during the current year;

(c) what was the total production of raw jute during the present season State-wise; and

(d) what is the production cost of raw jute per metric tonnes at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) A statement, is attached. (See beloio.)

(b) The Jute Corporation of India has already procured over 15 lack bales of raw jute so far which is substantially higher than the highest ever recorded during this period in the past.

(c) So far as production of raw jute during. 1985-86 season is concerned, the final estimates as published by the Ministry of Agriculture, are not yet due.

(d) The Commisson for Agricultural Costs and Prices while formulating their recommendaions on price policy for raw jute for the year 1985-86 have stated that the updated cost of production of raw jute works out to about Rs. 208 per quintal for West Bengal and Rs. 212 per quintal for Assam .

Statement

With the harvesting of a bumper crop of raw jute this season, prices have declined to support level in almost all up-country markets. With a view to protect the interest of jute growers, the following steps have been taken: —

(i) The Jute Corporation of India has been directed to undertake large scale purchases of raw jute at minimum statutory prices fixed by the Government;

(ii) Sufficient credit has been placed at the disposal of Jute Corporation of India for undertaking price support operation;

(iii) A directive has been issued on 6-9-85 by jute Commisioner to all working jute mills *in* the private sector to build up stocks qf raw jute up to specified levels so as to step up purcha scs of raw jute by mills;

(iv) The Jute Corporation of India has been permitted to export a limited quantity of raw jute.

Coal Mine accidents

999. SHRI NEPALDEV BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) how many coal mine accidents